

Stepping stone cities? : exploring urban greening and gardening as a viable contribution to global biodiversity conservation

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Stepping Stone Cities?

Exploring Urban Greening and Gardening as a Viable Contribution to
Global Biodiversity Conservation

Carijn Beumer

Maastricht, december 2014

1. What is the academic value of a dissertation without citing at least one of the ancient Greeks?
2. Scientific analysis doesn't work without a creative mind.
3. "One of the most highly developed skills in contemporary Western civilization is dissection: the splitting up of problems into their smallest possible components. We are good at it. So good, we often forget to put the pieces back together again." Toffler in Prigogine and Stengers, 1984.
4. The 'geeks' and the 'goofs' have the potential to inspire our societies away from the unsustainable status quo. Therefore, we'd better listen to marginalized perspectives and integrate fringe theories into the spectrum of policy options.
5. 'Novel nature' is not enough appreciated by traditional conservation organisations.
6. Urban based conservation may become a viable approach to help global biodiversity but this cannot be achieved within any neoliberal political climate.
7. Stepping Stone Cities can never compensate for the loss of complex and intricate ecosystems with species and their functional relations that evolved over many millions of years.
8. Without philosophical reflection and an attitude based on Critical Theory, Sustainability Science is an empty honey jar.
9. Reading fairytales and other imaginative stories makes you feel and know truths that the truth itself can never tell you (adapted from Salman Rushdie, 2013, p.19)
10. Improvisation in jazz helps find a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics of the harmony, patterns, and rhythms that can be found in the natural world.
11. Any economic or commercial valorisation of an academic dissertation violates the principles of fundamental research and of free academic thinking.